

On Borrowed Experience.

*An Analysis of Listening
to Daytime Sketches.*

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If, on an average weekday, one could see at a glance what all the women throughout the country are doing at a specific time, he would find at least two million of them listening to a so-called "day-time serial." Some of these women would just be sitting in front of the radio; most of them would be doing some housework at the same time; but all of these two millions would attentively follow the day's installment of a dramatization which mirrors scenes from the everyday life of middle class people. A number of these stories have gone on for eight years. Each day's episode is introduced by a short summary of the previous day's events, and winds up with questions preparing for the coming sequel. "What will Mrs. X do tomorrow?" "Will Fate catch up with Mr. Y?"

A program of this kind lasts fifteen minutes, and when it is finished another serial comes on the air. Often eight or ten such programs follow one another without interruption other than the voice of the announcer who tells about the product and the company sponsoring the particular dramatization. There are between two and three hundred stories broadcast over American stations during the day, and in one of the larger cities a woman can listen to a score or two of them between morning and evening without more effort than an occasional switch of the dial from one station to another.

Since the life of very many middle class and lower middle class people is uneventful, the variety of incidents in these programs is many times greater than anything which these women could live through or observe themselves. Thus the question comes up of whether, through daytime serials, radio is likely to have a great influence upon the attitude of these listeners toward their own lives and the problems they have to meet.

To determine the effect of these programs seems an urgent, but by no means easy task of contemporary social research. One would

have to study their content very carefully. One would have to know which women listen and which women do not listen. Most of all, one would have to check periodically, with a great variety of listeners, to see whether there are any changes in their way of thinking and living which could be traced to the programs.

The present study has tried to prepare the way for such a larger enterprise by reporting on interviews with a number of women who listen regularly and were asked about what these programs mean to them, why they listen, and what they do with what they hear. It is intended to give a picture of these women's reactions and to develop a conceptual framework which would be helpful for future, more elaborate analysis.

The Material.

The report is based on personal interviews obtained within the last two years with 100 women living in Greater New York. An effort was made to cover women in various age and income groups. Most of the persons interviewed were housewives, some had worked previous to their marriage, others had not. Among them were also a few high school students and a number of maids. All the women interviewed listened to at least two daytime serials regularly,¹ the number actually listened to varying from two to 22 programs daily. Thus, the study must be considered an analysis of fan listeners.

The first twenty interviews were made as "open" interviews to cover the ground thoroughly. From these discussions a questionnaire was developed which, in its final form, was used for the second half of the sample. The questionnaire covered the listening habits of the respondents, a detailed discussion of the favorite programs of each, a number of questions trying to get at the general appeal of the programs, and finally, some information about the listeners themselves, such as their reading habits, social activities, hobbies or special interests, favorite movies, and the things they wanted most in life. The questionnaire is attached in the Appendix.

"Getting into trouble and out again."

The listeners' reports on the content of their favorite stories boils down almost invariably to one stereotyped formula. Contents of various programs are described as "getting into trouble and out again." Following are a few answers given by the people studied when they were asked to describe their favorite story.

¹Sixty-five different programs were mentioned as listened to. The programs most frequently referred to were: Road of Life, Woman in White, Life Can Be Beautiful, and The Goldbergs.

I like DAVID HARUM. It is about a town philosopher who solves everyone's problems, even his enemies'. He is also in the races. Right now his horse has been poisoned and someone stole the body. They are trying to figure out why. *He always is in trouble and out again.*

My favorite is SOCIETY GIRL. The story is about a young man who marries the boss's daughter. The boss buys them a beautiful estate on Long Island. They are *going to have some kind of trouble* about the old graveyard and a tombstone which has been tampered with. They *will find a way out*, though.

I like the O'NEILLS. It is about a widowed mother and her children and grandchildren. The twins offer many problems. The son gets into riots, and the daughter may go to Chicago. But Ma O'Neill will *settle everything*, and *something else will come up*.

The average number of daytime serials listened to regularly by the women in this study is 6.6 programs. Very few of the listeners said "yes" to the question whether they were only listening "because there was nothing else on at this particular time of the day." When asked whether they selected the programs to fit their daily work-schedule or whether they adjusted their schedule to fit the programs, 31 per cent said the latter. Three-fourths of the listeners claimed they had never been "bored" with their favorite story, while 57 per cent could not mention any incident in the stories listened to which they had disliked in any way.

These data indicate an intensive and obviously quite satisfactory consumption of radio stories. How does this tie in with the fact that the "getting into trouble and out again" formula is applied to all the sketches? Why is it that people do not get tired of stories with the same theme?

Programs Picked to Match the Listener's Problems.

The listeners studied do not experience the sketches as fictitious or imaginary. They take them as reality and listen to them in terms of their own personal problems. Listeners to the same sketch agree about its "trouble" content, but find it realized in quite different ways. The following comments were made by women who listened to the same program, namely, ROAD OF LIFE.

It is concerning a doctor, his life and how he always tries to do the right thing. Sometimes he gets left out in the cold too.

Dr. Brent is a wonderful man, taking such good care of a poor little orphan boy. He is doing God's work.

It is a drama, Jim Brent and Dr. Parsons—jealousy, you know. There are several characters, but Jim Brent is the important one. He will win out in the end.

It is about a young doctor in Chicago. I like to hear how he cures sick people. It makes me wonder whether he could cure me too.

All of these listeners look for the "troubles" in the story and how they are solved, but each interprets the "trouble" situation according to her own problems. Thus, for example, a sick listener stresses the sick people cured by the doctor in the story. The young high school girl, who wishes she knew interesting people like Dr. Brent, picks the jealousy aspect of the story and the way Dr. Brent stands up to it. The woman over forty, with the memory of a sad childhood, insists that Dr. Brent "is doing God's work." And the mother sacrificing herself for an unappreciative family feels a common bond in the fact that "sometimes he (Dr. Brent) is left out in the cold too."

Each of these women also listens to a number of other programs. In picking the programs she likes, she selects those presenting problems which are to her mind most intimately related to her own. Sometimes all the stories listened to have the same central theme to the listener. Thus the woman quoted above, who likes Dr. Brent because of his kindness to the orphan boy, listens to four other programs which have a "kind adult" for one of their leading characters. Her comment on *RIGHT TO HAPPINESS* is: "The mother is a fine woman. She gave her life up for her child." Of *HILLTOP HOUSE* she says: "The woman there is not getting married because she has to take care of the orphanage." She also listens to *MYRT AND MARGE* and *THE O'NEILLS*, which she describes in similar terms as having a "kind mother" as the leading character.

Similarly, the young high school girl who would like to know a person like Dr. Brent listens, in addition to *ROAD OF LIFE*, to two more programs, which she describes as "love stories." They are *OUR GAL SUNDAY* and *HELEN TRENT*.

Sometimes the listeners go through quite a complicated process of shifting and exchanging incidents and characters in their favorite stories to suit their own particular needs. This behavior was brought out clearly in the case of a middle aged quite balanced woman whose chief interest in life is her family. She listens to only two radio programs because she claims she has "no time for more." Listening for her has the function of keeping alive the contact with the various members of her family when the real members are at work or in school. Her favorite story is *PEPPER YOUNG'S FAMILY*. She is interested in it because "the son there acts against his father just the way our son does." But she doesn't care for the mother in this sketch because "she is too submissive"; so she turns to a second program, *THE WOMAN IN WHITE*, for there "the woman is boss."

By scrambling the mother in the one sketch with the father and son in the other she establishes a family situation which she considers most "similar" to her own. To use her own words, the programs "help keep her company" when she is at home alone.

The more complex the listener's troubles are or the less able she is to cope with them, the more programs she seems to listen to. Thus we find on the one hand the woman quoted above who listens to only two programs because she has "no time" for more—that is, probably "no need" for more. On the other hand is the extreme case of a colored maid in a home with no fewer than five radios in it, who listens to twenty-two stories daily. To this person of very little education, with no friends or relatives and few opportunities for a normal life, the radio stories are practically everything. "Sunday," she said, "is a very bad day for me. I don't know what to do with myself. During the week I have the stories." When asked how long, in her opinion, a story should last, misunderstanding the reason for the question she said anxiously, "They're not going to stop them, are they? I'd be lost without them!"

Having no life apart from the stories, this listener wants to listen to as many of them and as long as she possibly can. Since all the stories have the common theme of getting into trouble and out again, it is possible for the listener to combine aspects of various stories into a sort of patchwork of "reality" which best fits her particular needs.

Three Main Types of Gratification.

Basically the various stories mean the same thing to all the listeners. They appeal to their insecurity and provide them in one way or another with remedies of a substitute character. This occurs in, roughly, three types of reactions, which are differentiated as modes of experience but not in terms of their function.

1. Listening to the stories offers an emotional release.
2. Listening to the stories allows for a wishful remodelling of the listener's "drudgery."
3. Listening provides an ideology and recipes for adjustment.

Some of the listeners enjoy the stories primarily as a means of letting themselves go emotionally. Others enjoy them because they provide the opportunity to fill their lives with happenings which they would like to experience for themselves. Still others enjoy them in a more realistic way because they furnish them with formulas to bear the kind of life they are living.

Following is a detailed description of how these various types of gratification come about.²

I. LISTENING AS AN EMOTIONAL RELEASE.

Many of the listeners become emotionally excited when listening to the stories. When asked whether they had ever been "very excited" about a story, 50 per cent of them said yes. A number also claimed they could not work while listening. Said one of them: "I can't even do my crocheting when I am listening. I just have to sit still, they get me so excited." The claims of excitement aroused by listening were corroborated by actual observations of some of the respondents while they listened to a story. Such observations were made in a casual and thus quite reliable manner. If for instance a woman complained that the interview interfered with her favorite story, the interviewer politely offered to listen with her and postponed the interview until afterward. In this way it was actually observed how excited some of the listeners became, how they were talking back to the radio, warning the heroes, and so on.

Listening to the stories provides for emotional release in various forms. It provides an outlet for the pent-up anxieties in giving the listener a "chance to cry." It provides, secondly, emotional stimuli and excitement to a listener who is temperamentally unable to have such emotional experiences otherwise or who lives a kind of life which just does not provide such stimuli. Third, it gives the listener a chance to compensate for her own hardships through aggressiveness against other people. Sometimes such tendencies of aggressiveness are satisfied within the stories themselves by giving the listener the opportunity to enjoy "other people's troubles." Sometimes the stories serve as a means to feel vastly superior to people in the actual environment of the listener. Building a "union of sufferers" with the characters of the story, the listener becomes contemptuous and aggressive against members of the world actually surrounding her.

A Chance to Cry.

Several of the respondents like the sketches because they give them a chance to let themselves go and to release the anxiety stored up in them. This is what the crippled listener already quoted said:

In a case like mine you can go crazy just sitting and thinking, thinking. Sometimes the stories get me and I cry. I think I am a fool, but it makes me feel better.

²The material was not sufficiently large to study the important problem of the correlation of listener characteristics and type of gratification obtained from listening.

Another case is that of a newly married young woman. She used to work before she was married; now she has to live with her in-laws and is quite upset over the narrowness of her new life. She turned to the radio stories originally in order to have something to talk about with her mother-in-law. She said:

There is no one program I like particularly well. They all tug at the heart-strings, they are so sad. I am very nervous sometimes, but my troubles are such stupid ones. I love to listen to the programs; I can cry with them.

The sketches, in their *specific* sad content, serve as an outlet for the *unspecific* anxiety of this listener. They give her a chance to cry, which is gratifying for two reasons. First, many adults would deny themselves the "right" to cry over themselves. Having outgrown the status of the child who could come and cry on its mother's lap, they have lost the comfort of an emotional release in spite of the increase in problems demanding such release. In the second place, the stories allow for crying without the listener's having to reveal the real reasons for her wanting to cry.

In other instances the programs are enjoyed not as an outlet but as a stimulus for an emotional excitement which the listener misses in actual life.

"Surprise, happy or sad."

The above is the comment of a woman who says she has always enjoyed life. She mentions nothing that she would like to have. She feels that the troubles in radio stories are about the same as her own. "But," as she says, "they can make more of it. They can put them on a big scale." She herself is middle aged, excessively fat, placid, and barely able to read or write. Anything that moves her is "fine." She wants the stories to "go on forever." She likes HELEN TRENT because:

She has hundreds of experiences with her designing, and all. There is always a surprise coming up. Happy or sad, I love it.

When asked whether she would prefer to have her favorite story happen to her in actual life she answered with a decided no. "I am too old," she said. "When you get older you give all that (romance) up."

Similarly, the young woman quoted before, who finds relief in crying over the stories, says she would rather lead a "peaceful life" than have the actual experiences as told in the stories. The listeners

prefer the release of being moved to the moving experience itself. They accept the stories as a substitute for reality, just as they identify themselves with the content of the stories and take, as will be seen, the success of the heroine as a substitute for their own success.

The stories make for a short-lived pseudo-catharsis. The laughing or crying produced by them makes the listeners feel better only as long as the story lasts. They keep asking for new "surprises" and new "chances to cry," in the realization that their actual lives will not give them the emotional experiences they crave. "I am too old for romance," says one woman. "My life would make a stupid story," says another. Thus the question might be raised of whether the temporary emotional release obtained from listening to other people's troubles will not, in the long run, have to be paid for by an intensified sense of frustration and by the listener's having been rendered still more incapable of realizing emotional experiences outside the stories.

"If I'm blue it makes me feel better . . ."

A number of the listeners said they felt a sense of relief in knowing that "other people had their troubles too." In a few cases this relief is tied up with the fact that in finding out about other people's troubles the listener loses the sense of having been singled out for trouble herself. In a few others it seems related to the stories' helpfulness in focussing a general sense of frustration upon events or things which "happen." If one knows what is wrong, and if this happens to be a particular "event," rather than the structure of the society one lives in, it makes for a release of anxiety. Most frequently, however, the listeners enjoy the troubles of other people as a means to compensate for their own misery through aggressiveness against others. The stories provide the listeners with subjects to be aggressive against.

Some of the respondents find a particular relief in listening to the troubles of other people who are supposedly "smarter" than they are. In the words of one of them:

If I am gloomy it makes me feel better to know that other people have hardships too. They are so smart and still they have to suffer.

The listeners also enjoy the stories as an outlet for feelings of aggressiveness which they would not allow themselves otherwise. An example is the reaction of a listener describing herself as a "religious" woman. She reads no other book but the Bible and dislikes the movies because they are not "clean." She approves, how-

ever, of the radio stories because the people in them "are so brave about their own troubles and in helping other people. They teach you to be good." Although she claims she listens to "learn to be still more helpful," the episode she liked best was one which dealt with a catastrophe suffered by the heroine:

I liked it best when they were so happy before the husband got murdered and so sad afterwards.

The interest in other people's misfortunes was also brought out in the answers to the question whether and about which incidents the respondents had ever been very much excited. Forty-one per cent of those who answered in the affirmative referred to murders, violent accidents, gangsters, and fires; 15 per cent more mentioned illness and dying; 26 per cent spoke of psychological conflicts, while only 18 per cent named incidents of a non-violent or non-catastrophic kind. The aggressive meaning of these answers was exemplified rather strikingly in the following comment of a listener who explained why she never had been really excited. Referring to *WOMAN IN WHITE* she said:

I thought the murder *would* be exciting. But it was not. It happened abroad somewhere.

How closely the aggressiveness against the radio characters is tied up with the listener's desire to find compensation for her own troubles is demonstrated in the following remark of a listener. She has had a hard time bringing up her children after her husband's death. She chooses programs which have as their heroine a self-sacrificing woman. Her comment about one of them is:

I like *HILLTOP HOUSE*. The woman there is always doing things for children. . . . I wonder whether she will ever get married. Perhaps it isn't right for her to do it and give up the orphanage. She is doing such a wonderful thing. I really don't think she should get married.

This listener compensates for her resented fate by wishing a slightly worse one upon her favorite radio character. In return for the death of her own husband she wants the heroine to have no husband at all. She expects her to sacrifice herself for orphan children, whereas she herself is sacrificing herself for her own.

In the examples given so far the listeners found scapegoats for aggressiveness within the stories themselves. In the cases which will be reported below the stories serve as a means to bolster up tendencies of aggressiveness which are directed against people in the listeners' actual environment.

The Union of Sufferers.

Some of the listeners use the stories to magnify their own "suffering." In identifying their sacrifices with those in the stories they find a means to label and to enhance their own. When one of the respondents was asked the routine question about whether she was married and whether she had any children, she gave the following information. She was a widow and she had been living with her only son. Recently, however, she had moved away from her son's apartment so as "not to be in his way." She was induced to make this sacrifice by her favorite story, STELLA DALLAS. Her comment on the heroine which was made at some other point of the interview, was:

She is like me. She also does not want to be in her daughter's way . . . How does she look? Well, she is a regular person, one in a thousand, always doing the right thing. She is getting tired and haggard. She has just spent herself.

It is possible that this listener did move away from her son's apartment to be like "Stella Dallas." We do not know how voluntary this act of hers was or how much it was appreciated. In any case, her identification with the radio heroine who has "spent herself" gives the listener a chance to make the most of her own act of tolerance and self-sacrifice.

Such identified tolerance sometimes gives the listener a feeling of superiority. She feels different from other people. Admiring the radio characters excessively, she imagines she is like them. While rising to new heights of "tolerance" in this identification, she becomes at the same time contemptuous and critical of the world around her. An example of this may be found in the following two remarks by a woman who listens to the programs because the people in them are so "wonderful":

They teach you how to be good. I have gone through a lot of suffering, but I still can learn from them.

Yet this same woman, when asked whether she disliked any program, answered:

I don't listen to THE GOLDBERGS. Why waste electricity on the Jews?

Obviously her "tolerance" wasn't wide enough to include the Jews. It seems rather a means to feel superior to them.

An example of the manner in which the stories are used as an excuse for being critical of people in the listener's actual environ-

ment is the case of a woman living in the neighborhood known as Greenwich Village. She "loathes it." When asked what she wanted most in life she said: "A home in the country, just for me and my family, with a *white fence* around it."

She admires the programs because they portray the "clean American life," as contrasted to the hated "Village." Admiration for the radio people is for her a means to exaggerate her contempt against the world surrounding her while at the same time providing for a fence against it.

II. LISTENING AS A MEANS OF REMODELLING ONE'S DRUDGERY.

In the various forms of gratification characterized as "emotional release," listening makes for the stimulation or the release of emotions which the listener would not be able to feel or allow herself to enjoy otherwise. The story content is only indirectly important insofar as it provides a sufficiently strong emotional appeal.

In the cases to be described now the connection between the radio stories and the listener's situation is of a much more comprehensive character. Emphasis is on the specific content of the story rather than on its emotional appeal. The listener pretends that what is happening in the stories is happening to her. She not only feels *with* the radio characters, like the person who gets emotional release from listening; she *is* the characters. Accepting the story content as a substitute for reality, she uses it to remodel her life. In this type of experience the distinction between "story" reality and actual reality is destroyed by wishful thinking.

Drowning One's Troubles.

In the most radical form of identification the listener escapes into the story quite consciously. She makes use of the stories to superimpose upon her life another, more desirable life. Listening works as a potent drug making her forget her own troubles while listening to those described in the stories. One of these listeners said:

I can hardly wait from Friday till Monday, when the stories come on again. They make me forget my own troubles. I have only money problems. They don't. Their troubles are more complicated, but also more exciting. Also, they can solve them. For instance, they just hop into a plane when they want to go to Washington. Money doesn't seem to matter to them. In the stories there is real romance. I love to hear about romance. I keep waiting for David to propose.

The stories are as real to the listener as an actual experience. She experiences the romance of MARY MARLIN as if it were her own.

A romance experienced by means of the story is a satisfactory substitute for a real life experience, because of two conditions which do not exist in reality. For one, happenings in the stories are to a large extent determined by the listener's desires. If she wants a romance she selects a program which gives it to her. Within the story, the listener still has a choice in terms of "how it ought to be." If MARY MARLIN in the story does not get enough romance the listener may still feel:

I would have made David propose months ago. They don't have to make him the perfect bachelor. I would have made him slip.

If the listener feels the story is not going to develop at all the way she wants it to, she may even discontinue listening and look for another story. Such discontinuation of listening to a program which had been listened to regularly before was reported by 63 per cent. In two-thirds of the cases the reasons were external, such as the program having gone off the air. In one-third the program was no longer listened to because of the listeners' disapproval. The most frequent reasons were that it was "too improbable," or "too monotonous." Both these objections in most cases meant merely that the program was not developing fast enough or not in the direction the listener hoped it would. This is brought out quite clearly in the comment of a listener who stopped listening to HELEN TRENT:

I stopped listening when Helen Trent went to Hollywood. It was so improbable. I have been in Hollywood myself. It is an awful place. Wives lose their husbands there. Why did she not go to some nice, safe place? There are a lot of them in this country.

The program was considered "improbable" because its expected course threatened to interfere with the listener's desire to hear about "nice," that is, "safe" places and relationships.

Secondly, listening provides the chance to live "exciting lives" while one "relaxes" and "smokes a cigarette." As mentioned already, hardly any of the listeners would prefer to have the incidents of the stories actually happen to them instead of hearing them over the radio. They enjoy a condition in which they may lose themselves in an excitement related to borrowed rather than to their own experiences.

Examples of complete escape into the stories, such as the one quoted above, were not frequent among the women studied. This is probably due to the character of the stories. They supposedly portray everyday life and contain at least so many allusions to it that they do not allow very easily for a complete forgetting of the

listeners' own drudgery. For the most part the listeners studied select certain aspects of the stories to fit into their lives in such a way as to make them more interesting or more agreeable. Such glorification of the listeners' own life goes all the way from finding fulfillment of desires which are not fully satisfied in life to finding compensation for personal failure in borrowing the story-character's success.

Cultivating the "Happy" Aspects.

Some of the respondents use the radio programs to get more of the kind of experiences which they claim to enjoy in real life. An example is the case of a young married woman who likes to listen to "some other happy marriages." She says:

I just love to listen to those programs. Dr. Brent is like a second husband. After all, I can get married only once. I would love to have some more husbands.

We cannot tell from our data whether the listener is as happily married as she claims to be. The Dr. Brent in the story is not an admitted substitute for her real husband. Very likely, however, the desires for her marriage are greater than their fulfillment and listening to Dr. Brent as a "second husband" is used to make up for it.

Similarly, another "happily married" woman says: "I like to snatch romance wherever I can get more of it."

In both instances there is the desire to use the stories as a means of duplicating what one already has. The added quantity provides a substitute for an intensity of experience which is probably lacking in real life.

Filling in the Gaps.

Still others use the programs to inject into their lives elements which they admittedly miss in actual life. Here belongs the woman married to a sick husband whom she loves very much. Her favorite program is VIC AND SADE and she especially likes the "funny episodes" in it. She says:

Since my husband got sick we haven't had much fun. I love to listen to VIC AND SADE. They are like us. Vic looks like my husband. Many funny things happen to them. I always tell my husband about them.

The episode she liked best was the one in which Sade mixed up her shoes at a friend's party and came home with one shoe that was

hers and one that was not. This listener probably feels tied down in a marriage which, at the moment, seems to be based primarily on loyalty. Telling her husband about the funny episodes happening to the couple in the story serves as a substitute for their actual occurrence.

One of the gratifications of this type most interesting from a sociological point of view is tied up with stories of doctors as the leading characters. Listening to such stories is a source of extreme gratification not only for the old spinster or the widow:

Dr. Brent is such a lovely man. He takes care of physical and spiritual problems of all the people who come to him. He reminds me a little bit of my own doctor, but I think Dr. Brent is a younger and more lovable man.

My husband died and my brother had a stroke. I really don't have anybody to talk to, and I would have needed advice in the tragedy which happened to my daughter. Dr. Brent is such a fine man. It helps me to listen to him. I really have him right in my room.

The kind and efficient Dr. Brent is enjoyed also by the woman who said, at one point in the interview: "At home *I* am the boss," indicating that she does not consider her husband qualified to be. Dr. Brent is loved, too, by the girl who wishes she knew "another person like him." Women in all phases of life seem to have a frequently unfulfilled need for the kind and able male who is protector rather than economic provider or competitor. The doctor of the story fits into this gap. He acquires a kind of father-role for the listener.³

Reviving Things Past.

Some listeners use the stories to revive things that are past and gone. The associations provided by the stories serve to carry them back to other, more pleasant times. Thus a woman, who was brought up in a small town and feels homesick for it, finds in DAVID HARUM a chance to get back to the small-town life she once knew. Says this listener:

I like to listen to DAVID HARUM and his homely philosophy. It is about a small town. I was brought up in one too, and I loved it.

³Whether the importance of the doctor as a father substitute is fostered by the story contents or due to a particular attitude among the listeners cannot be decided without a careful content analysis. Such an analysis is at present under way at the Office of Radio Research at Columbia University. Be it either way, the stress on doctors as psychological consultants might indicate a declining importance of the minister as the helper in spiritual matters. It seems as if, for many people, health has become a substitute for salvation.

Another woman likes *OUR GAL SUNDAY* because she herself grew up in a mining town. Listening to the story reminds her of "home." She says:

OUR GAL SUNDAY is about a poor girl found on a doorstep. She is raised by two men in a mining town, and when she grows up she marries a lord. The part about the mining town reminds me of my own life, for I was brought up in one too. I am so far away and there's nobody here to remind me of it otherwise.

Sometimes it is persons, and not situations, that are remembered, as in the case of a listener who said, referring to *THE GOLDBERGS*:

Ma Goldberg reminds me of a woman I used to know as a kid. She lived right next door. She was always finding excuses when we didn't behave well. She was always saying good things.

Thirty-nine per cent of the listeners stated they had known "similar" people, while 27 per cent said they had come across "similar" situations to those described in some of the stories. The difference between the two figures must first be proven in a larger sample before an interpretation ought to be ventured. Even in the small sample tested, both figures were significantly higher than the number of cases whose primary source of gratification was related to the familiarity with the persons or situations depicted in the program. Associations with the past account for the primary enjoyment of a program only if the memories evoked are a highly suitable substitute for a less desirable present. This is illustrated in the following comment of a respondent:

I like to listen to *HELEN TRENT*. Her romance sounds like mine. My husband was always so lovable and affectionate. He never squabbled. We were very happy, and still are. This story brings back my romance after nineteen years.

This woman was probably not aware that in telling her story she invariably used the past tense. Her "we are still happy" exemplifies exactly the kind of gratification she gets from listening. There is probably more "squabbling" now between herself and her husband. She enjoys *HELEN TRENT* as the chance to relive her own early love experiences by pretending that what was true nineteen years ago is still true today.

For the listener it seems more important that the story evokes a memory which allows for wishful thinking than that the similarity between story situation and remembered situation is a complete one. If the listener would like very much that what happens in the story would actually happen to her, she is likely to construct "similarities"

in an artificial manner. This is exemplified in the comment of a 55 year old woman who also listens to the romance of HELEN TRENT because it reminds her of experiences of her youth. When she was asked whether she had ever used any product of a sponsoring company, she said:

I use the face cream advertised by HELEN TRENT because she is using it and she is over 35 years herself and still has all those romances.

This listener does not seem quite convinced about the applicability of the story. By using the beautifying cream that her heroine uses she adds supporting evidence to the rather weak and wishful analogy between herself and Helen Trent. The product, particularly if tied up with the story in such an intricate manner, is the link between the world of story happenings and reality. Through the real face cream the fictitious happenings of the stories are brought within the realm of possible occurrences.⁴

Compensating for Failure through Identification with Success.

A great number of the women use the stories to compensate for specific personal failures. They enjoy listening to the success the radio heroine is having in the field where they themselves have failed. When one of the women was asked what she wanted most in life she said, "A happy marriage." She also said that she didn't like to have company because her husband might be "rude" to them. This woman picks as her favorites stories in which "a woman puts things over." Her comment is interesting:

I like EASY ACES. There is a dumb woman and she puts things over. I also like HILLTOP HOUSE. The woman in it is always doing things. She has no time to marry.

This listener's comment on HILLTOP HOUSE is very different from the comments of other listeners to the same program. Instead of stressing the self-sacrificing and "doing good" elements she interprets the story in terms of her own difficulties and failures. According to her, the heroine "has no time to marry," and she sees in her the "independent" rather than the "good" woman.

Still another of the listeners seems to have been a failure in her family relations. Her daughter has run away from home to marry,

⁴The kind of advertising in which the product is built into the events of the story in such a manner that it seemingly accounts for some of the "nice" things in the stories is probably more efficient than a promotion of the product which is independent of the story. The respondents occasionally stressed that they disliked such advertising because it "takes time away from the story."

and of her husband she says, "He is away from home five nights of the week." She picks programs like *THE GOLDBERGS* or *THE O'NEILLS*, each portraying a successful mother or wife. She says:

I like the *O'NEILLS*. It stresses harmony and yet it portrays the individuality of family members.

At the same time she is quite critical of Ma O'Neill and says:

No woman can be that divine and keep her ideals that long.

And of Ma Goldberg she says:

I have no such hysteria and excitement as Ma Goldberg has. I would never butt into other people's lives as she does.

Why does she go on listening if she disapproves of the leading characters? Obviously she would not be able to bear the thought that other women are so much more successful than she if she could not find any fault with them. She has to tell herself that the stories are not quite true to life or that *MA GOLDBERG* is not a pleasant personality type if she wants to enjoy listening to them. Her superficial criticism of the stories is the condition for her being able to use them as fully as substitutes as she actually does.

Betting on Outcomes as a Means of Feeling Superior.

A few of the better educated among the respondents disclaimed any personal interest in the stories and said they listened only for entertainment. They were interested in seeing "how problems are treated" or "how things come out." One of them said:

I used to go to work previously. This always gave me a lift. I have nothing to keep me busy now. I listen to the programs for no personal reasons. I want to see how problems are treated. I'm usually right in my predictions.

These listeners do not have a "personal" interest in the stories in the sense that they want to identify with, or escape into, the content of the stories. They use the stories chiefly as a means to demonstrate to themselves or some of their co-listeners that they were right in predicting the outcome.⁵ If things do not turn out as they predicted, they can always claim that the stories aren't true to life. In passing judgment on script writers and actors they consider themselves

⁵A similar reaction was also found among listeners to the Professor Quiz program. See Paul F. Lazarsfeld, *Radio and the Printed Page*, page 87. There it took the form of the listeners' selecting the potential winner from among all the contestants right after the beginning of the program and following it through like a race.

superior to those who "take such stories seriously." They feel on a level with powerful people who are controlling things rather than being controlled.

The feeling of superiority connected with such a "detached" appraisal of the stories is illustrated in the following comment:

I like SCATTERGOOD BAINES. It is a New England situation. He is one of Clarence Budington Kelland's best characters. He has possibility and flexibility . . . I bet with my daughter on the endings. It all fits into my interest in social work. Of course, I would never take anything seriously in them, but I suppose some people do.

The stories provide this listener with substitutes just as they do the more naive listener. Betting on the outcome is a chance to be right. Thus it works as compensation for the listener's lack of success in other fields. Judging the characters of the script writer seems to be a substitute for being a real friend of his or of other "interesting" people.

III. LISTENING FOR RECIPES MAKING FOR ADJUSTMENT.

In the types of gratification described as "remodelling of drudgery" the story content serves as a means wishfully to change the listener's life. Many listeners, however, do not identify themselves with the stories to the extent of accepting them as substitutes for reality. They identify themselves with them only insofar as they provide adjustment to the kind of life they are living. The stories provide such adjustment in three main forms. They give meaning to a world which seems nothing but a humdrum existence by offering a continuous sequence of events. Second, they give the listener a sense that the world is not as threatening as it might seem by supplying them with formulas of behaviour for various troublesome situations. Third, they explain things by providing labels for them. Happenings in a marriage, in a family, in a community are verbalized in the programs and the listeners are made to feel that they understand better what is going on around them. Listening provides them with an ideology to be applied in the appraisal of the world which is actually confronting them.

The following analysis aims to show in greater detail how each of these "recipes for adjustment" comes about and with what elements in the stories they tie up particularly.

"I don't feel empty any longer."

A number of respondents claimed that the stories had filled their "empty lives" with content. The mere fact that something is

scheduled to occur every day provides an element of adventure⁶ in their daily drudgery. Life becomes meaningful as a sequence of daily fifteen minute broadcasts.

. . . the stories have really given me something. I don't feel empty any longer.

Nothing ever happens in my life, but I have the sketches. It is something to look forward to every day.

But for the sketches, this listener feels she would have nothing to look forward to from one day to the next. The stories make for adjustment to an otherwise empty and meaningless life because of their continued character.

When asked how long a radio story should last, only 12 per cent of the respondents placed a limit in terms of months. The rest wanted them to last at least a year or longer. Some suggested that a story should go on "as long as it was interesting," or "forever." Here are some comments on this aspect:

I want the story to go on for years so that my family can grow up right along with it.

They should go on as long as they are interesting. One gets to know the people and they are like one of the family. I would hate to lose them.

The listeners do not want to lose the story-family which is the model for their actual family. They do not want to lose the story characters they have grown to consider as belonging to their family. They want the stories to go on because they hate to lose the sense of an eventful life they built up listening to them. This is true even for the women who wanted a limit put on the length of the stories. Their objections are not directed against "serial" stories as such; they want a limited length only to avoid "dragging." Thus:

If they keep them too long they have to drag them. They should get things settled once in a while so they can get a fresh start.

By "dragging," the listeners mean too much talking, as interfering with the progress of the action. They dislike it because it spoils the illusion of a life full of happenings. Here is a typical comment of a woman who was "bored" by too much talking:

Last time I listened to BIG SISTER they wanted to get somebody to help this boy who has a tumor. They wanted to get a specialist. It wasn't so interesting. The two of them (Ruth and John) just sat and

⁶In a way the radio stories have taken up the old epic form which describes life as a series of adventures. This form is also still alive in the "funnies."

talked. They didn't do anything. I thought the boy might die in the meantime. Why didn't they get going?

The listener disliked the lengthy discussion between Ruth and John because she feared "the boy might die in the meantime." This would have put a sudden end to his part in the story and thus destroyed the sense of a continuously eventful life she had enjoyed in listening.

The desire to have things "go on" seems really a desire to have them continue in the expected way, along accepted patterns. In a culture which represses curiosity, first of all in the sexual sphere, people are made to cling to stereotyped solutions. The deeper the frustrations the greater the needs for such stereotypes.

An interesting corroboration of this hypothesis was found in correlating the desired length of the stories with the total number of stories listened to. Among the women listening to fewer than five programs a day, for each ten who gave any limitation for the stories or said they had no opinion, there were three who wanted the stories to go on "forever" or "as long as they were good." Among those who listened to five or more programs the number rose to seven.

If, in this connection, we take the number of programs listened to as an index of the listener's insecurity and needs, we can then say that the more troubles the listener has the longer she wants the stories to last. And it is probably no mere coincidence that the movie most frequently mentioned as best liked should be *GONE WITH THE WIND*, the longest of all the most recent pictures. As one woman put it, when asked how long a story should last:

It should just go on like *GONE WITH THE WIND*. It can have no end.

"They teach me what to do."

Another form of listening which makes for adjustment of the listener to her own life is related to the advice obtained from hearing the various stories. Many of the respondents explained spontaneously that they liked listening because the stories taught them what to do or how to behave. Following are a few comments:

I listen for what good it will do me. The end of the story in *AUNT JENNY* always settles problems and sometimes the way they settle them would help me if the same thing happened to me.

If you listen to these programs and something turns up in your own life, you would know what to do about it.

I like to listen to Ma Goldberg and see how she goes about fixing things. It gives me something to think about when I am sewing. She teaches me what to do.

The listeners feel prepared for the complexities of their own lives in the conviction that there are formulas of behavior ready for all situations and that they can acquire them from listening to the stories. This conviction is closely tied up with the assumption that the stories are "true stories." This is a claim made by some of the programs and accepted by the listeners.

I like AUNT JENNIE'S STORIES because they are real everyday people that you might meet. They even tell you so—that they are real-life stories. I think they could happen.

The following incident shows that such a claim fits into the desires of the listeners who want the stories to be "true stories." A hypothetical question was posed: A new sponsor wants to introduce some changes in a program. Should he change the actors and leave the story the same, or would the respondent prefer to have him change the story but keep the same actors on the program?

A very great number of the women interviewed could not answer the question. They were unable to differentiate between the actor as a character and the actor as a person. The strength of the listeners' desire to believe that the stories are real is indicated even in the answer of a woman who supposedly understood the question and voted against a change in actors. She said:

The Youngs, Mr. and Mrs., used to have these long talks in bed, and now when they do I can't stand it. She is in bed with another man, now that they have changed actors.

The "truth" of the stories is defined in those terms which are most comforting to the listener. This is illustrated in the following comment of a listener who explained why she preferred listening to the stories to going to the movies:

I am not so crazy about the movies. The sketches are more real, more like my own life. The things that happen in the movies seldom happen to people that I know. I like to listen about plain, everyday people.

She considers the stories more "real" because they concern "average" people similar to herself so that she can identify herself with them. At the same time, however, she wants them to be sufficiently superior to herself to make the identification worth while. The characters in the stories have to be "plain" and at the same time exercise a "wonderful philosophy." The stories have to concern things which happen in "everyday life" while at the same time following the pattern of "getting into trouble *and out* again." In their demands upon the

story contents the listeners fluctuate between the two desires of wanting to learn from the stories and to use them as a means of escape. For learning's sake they want them to portray reality. As a means of escape they want them to picture a "better world." These two demands are not contradictory, as it seems at first. They have a common root in the insecurity of the listeners.

The Need for Advice.

The listeners would not seek advice in the stories if they did not need it and if the advice obtained did not, in a way, fit into their needs. A great number of the regular listeners to serial stories are lower income group housewives who see it as their duty to manage the home on what their husbands make. Many of them seem extremely insecure. This was brought out most strikingly in the answers to a question as to what three things they most wanted to have. In only 12% of the answers were such things as interesting friends, travel, sports, etc., important. All the rest wished for a secure home.

Advice, on the other hand, seems to be particularly inaccessible to the listeners studied. The husband shows up in the interviews as the economic provider rather than as a consultant in family affairs. Only one-fifth of the respondents mentioned that they see a great many friends. Various reasons are given for this. Seeing friends "costs money," which is not available. Seeing friends is an "effort," while listening to the stories is not. Friends have the same troubles as the listener, and since they cannot take care of their own, they wouldn't be of any help to the listener.

Lots of people have problems like mine or the ones told in the stories, but they would not be able to explain them.

Finally, the listener does not ask advice from friends because she would be ashamed to admit that she needs it.

It is altogether different with the radio. The listeners feel they have a right to expect and accept help because they patronize the companies which sponsor the programs. Of the women interviewed, 61% said that they used some of the products of sponsoring companies. Said one of them:

I am kidded by everybody because my pantry shelf is full of radio brands. The programs help me, so I've got to help the products.

In a way the radio seems to have taken the place of the neighbor. The neighbor as a competitor has become the stranger, while the radio in its aloofness is the thing humanly near to the listener. It

offers friends who are "wonderful and kind," and the listeners tend to forget that this kindness is designed to make them buy. They are enchanted by a one-sided relationship which fits into their isolationist desires. The radio people give advice and never ask for it, they provide help without the listeners having to reveal their need for it.

Last, but not least, the radio people and the occupations they portray are frequently socially superior to the listener. The listener enjoys their company because it raises her own social level. This was illustrated in the following comment of a lower income group housewife:

If you have friends in, you have to go down to their level. They are sometimes so dumb. The radio people are more interesting. I love being with them.

For many a listener actual friends seem to have acquired a new function. They are the people with whom she talks over the programs. The study shows that 41 per cent of the listeners discuss the stories with their friends.⁷ This discussion is of great psychological importance to the listener in that it allows for the transformation of the stories into something that is her own property. Thus, one of the respondents makes an out-of-town call every day to New Jersey to tell her girl friend about "her sketches." Very likely the girl friend in this case listens to the same stories. However, the respondent feels she discusses "her" stories with her. In a world which offers so few chances for real experiences, any happening must be made immediately into something owned. "Try to live today so tomorrow you can say what a wonderful yesterday," a sentiment expressed by a theme song, embodies the same desire to live so as to have memories.

"Potential" Advice.

The great majority of listeners spontaneously stated that they had learned something from listening to the stories. However, when asked whether any of the stories had ever indicated to them what to do in a particular situation or how to get along with people, only one-third said that they had. The reason for the drop lies in the listeners' preference for "potential" advice rather than a concrete application.

⁷Only 14 per cent discussed them with their husbands. 10 per cent talk them over with their children. 37 per cent do not discuss them with anyone. The percentages refer to the number of respondents mentioning each category.

The listeners enjoy getting a kind of advice which allows for wishful thinking. We happened to interview one woman on the day that the heroine in her favorite story had come into a lot of money. She was concerned with how she might keep her children from throwing it away. The listener felt that there was no chance of ever getting so much money herself, but still felt that she had learned from the program. She said:

It is a good idea to know and to be prepared for what I would do with so much money.

Although this listener knew the need for this advice would never come up, she enjoyed playing around with the idea. The advice works as a substitute for the condition of its applicability.

Similarly, a number of listeners claimed they enjoyed seeing how other people solved their troubles because it made them feel that "if the radio people can manage their troubles I might be able to also." In drawing the parallel they liked to overlook that the story situation might not be quite so complicated as their own, and that the story's heroine had more resources available than they had.

In line with this, the listeners are all in favor of a "beautiful philosophy" as long as they are not really expected to use it themselves. Thus, when asked why they liked the programs their answers were frequently like the following:

I like David Harum. He lives in the country and is a philosopher. He settles the problems of all the people who come to him. He helps those who have not against those who have. There are still good people left in the world.

I like THE GUIDING LIGHT. The minister there takes care of everybody who needs him. He keeps a light burning at night for people in distress to find him.

Listening to such kind people fills the respondents with the hope that a "guiding light" may burn for them also. That they are interested in the benefits of kindness rather than in its performance was brought out quite clearly in the answers to the question as to whether the listeners, at any point in their favorite story, would have acted differently from the characters in the story. They were split into two groups, those who talked about what "they would have done" and those who talked about what "the actors should have done." The former group disagreed on the ground of too much sacrifice in words like the following:

I would not have forgiven my husband that often. One has a right to happiness.

The latter group disagreed on the ground of too little sacrifice and said, for instance:

She went on the stage after her second marriage. The children did not like her new husband. She should not have done it. It was her fault they did not like him; she should have stayed at home.

The seriousness of the desire to learn paired with the desire for a comfortable solution is also demonstrated in the comments made in answer to the question whether the listeners knew of any problems they would like to have presented in a story. About one-third of the listeners answered in the affirmative. Here are a few quotations:

When a man's disposition changes suddenly after being married for a long time. He starts gambling and to be unfaithful. What's the explanation?

I should like to know how much a daughter should give her mother from the money she makes. I give everything I earn to my mother. Do I have to?

Whether I should marry if I have to live with my mother-in-law.

A story which would teach people not to put things over.

About religious and racial differences.

About mixed marriages.

The comments indicate a very great faith put in radio. People want the stories to solve their most specific and private problems. In the omission of controversial issues, the stories probably leave unsatisfied just those people who are the most eager searchers for means of adjustment. The comments also indicate that the listeners hope for a comforting solution. They would like to be told, for instance, that it is not necessary to give one's whole salary to the family. They would like a story which teaches "other people" not to put things over.

"They explain things to me."

Listening not only provides the respondents with formulas for behaviour in various situations, it also gives them sets of explanations with which they may appraise happenings. In following a story and hearing the characters discuss what occurs to them and how they feel about it, the listener feels she is made to "see things."

I like Papa David in LIFE CAN BE BEAUTIFUL. He always uses very much psychology.

I do not know much about life and I am sometimes scared seeing how things happen to people. It does me good to listen to these stories. They explain things to you.

I like family stories best. If I get married I want to get an idea of how a wife should be to a husband. Some of the stories show how a wife butts into everybody's business, and the husband gets mad and they start quarrelling. The stories make you see things.

In listening to the stories the often inarticulate listener finds that feelings can be expressed. She is made aware of a meaning to things which goes beyond the mere surface appearance. She realizes the existence of causal relations between happenings. There is, however, the danger that such "understanding" is paired with the illusion of a simple and ready explanation being available for every situation and every happening. The listener quoted last, for instance, seems satisfied with labelling a "good marriage" as one where the wife "does not butt into everybody's business."

Thus the question of what the listeners do with the knowledge acquired from listening becomes of paramount importance.

The Application of the Stories.

As mentioned above, one-third of the listeners stated that the stories had helped them "in indicating what to do in a particular situation or how to get along with other people." Following are some of the comments which show how the "advice" obtained has actually been applied by the listeners.

Listening to AUNT JENNIE'S STORIES today was very important for me. The fellow had an argument with the uncle and he blamed it on the girl. That was wrong of him. It was just like my boy friend. The other night I went to a wedding in the neighborhood where there were a lot of girl friends. Some of the boys told my boy friend. He has been mad at me ever since. Listening to the stories lets me know how other girls act, and listening to the way that girl argued today, I know how to tell my boy friend where he can get off. Life is so confusing sometimes.

Bess Johnson shows you how to handle children. She handles all ages. Most mothers slap their children. She deprives them of something. That is better. I use what she does with my own children.

When my lawsuit was on, it helped me to listen to Dr. Brent and how calm he was.

When my boy did not come home till late one night from the movies and I was so worried it helped me to remember how they had been worried in the story and he came home safely.

When Clifford's wife died in childbirth the advice Paul gave him I used for my nephew when his wife died.

The spheres of influence of the stories are quite diversified. The respondents feel they have been helped by being told how to get

along with other people, how to handle their boy friends or bring up their children. They feel they have learned how to express themselves in a particular situation. They have learned how to comfort themselves if worried.

In many cases these seem to be potential rather than fulfilled goals. The stories obviously released the worries of a mother by helping her pretend that everything will turn out all right and that her young son will come home safely; they have provided for an escape into calmness for a highly upset listener.

It is doubtful whether the girl's relationship to her boy friend is put on a sounder basis and a "confusing life" really understood when she has learned "how to tell her boy friend where he can get off." The woman who has learned to deprive her children rather than slap them seems to do the first thing in substitution for the other without understanding the underlying pedagogical doctrine. One might wonder how much the bereaved nephew appreciated the speech his aunt had borrowed from her favorite story.

Without a careful content analysis and a more elaborate study of the effects of listening upon the psychological make-up of the listeners it is impossible to give a final interpretation of the comments quoted above. It can not be decided from this material whether the stories are qualified to awaken or increase the psychological articulateness of the listener and have just been misunderstood or abused in some cases, or whether they themselves tend to foster a superficial orientation rather than true psychological understanding.

The analysis of gratifications, which was the problem of this study, has shown that the stories have become an integral part of the lives of many listeners. They are not only successful means of temporary emotional release or escape from a disliked reality. To many listeners they seem to have become a model of reality by which one is to be taught how to think and how to act. As such they must be written not only with an eye to their entertainment value, but also in the awareness of a great social responsibility.

7. (Ask this question only if #6 was answered with "No," or "Yes, program went off the air.") Are there any programs which you dislike or would not be at all interested in listening to? Yes.....No.....
If Yes: Which programs are they and why do you not care to listen to them?
8. Can you remember how long ago you first started listening to any daytime series? What first made you interested in them?

II. WHY LISTENING: GENERAL APPEAL

1. Various people listen to serials for various reasons. Which of the following points would you say are important to you? (*Interviewer:* Use free space on right hand side for respondent's comments.)
 - a. To have company when nobody else is around
 - b. To hear about somebody else's problems rather than your own for a while
 - c. To keep informed about how your radio friends are making out
 - d. Because you can count on something to happen every day
 - e. Because the people in the stories are a nice sort of people with a philosophy you approve of
 - f. Because you like to see how other people with problems similar to your own are making out
 - g. Because you like to hear about romance and family life and other things which have happened to you or might happen to you
 - h. Because it is a good way to find out what other people are concerned with
 - i. Because there is nothing else you can get at this time of the day
 - j. Because being at home a great deal of the day, you like to have your mind occupied.
2. Which do you like better: Listening to serials over the radio.....; Going to the movies.....; Why?
3. Which do you like better: Listening to serials over the radio.....; Reading a magazine.....; Why?
4. Which do you like better: Listening to serials over the radio.....; Being invited out or having company in.....; Why?
5. Which would you prefer: Having the stories told over the radio.....; Having the things told happen to you in real life.....; Why?

III. WHY LISTENING: APPEAL IN TERMS OF SPECIFIC EPISODES

A. FAVORITE PROGRAM

Ask the following in terms of the favorite program. Only when the question cannot be answered for the favorite program should it be asked for another serial. Be sure always to mention the name of the serial to which the answer refers.

1. Can you describe any events in your favorite story which you liked particularly? Yes.....No.....Details.
2. Can you describe any events for which you did not care at all?
3. Have you ever been bored at any point? Yes.....No.....
If Yes: When?
4. Do you find it hard to visualize the actors? Yes.....No.....
How do you picture them?
 - a. Does any of them remind you of a person you know? Yes.....
No.....*If Yes: Get details.*
 - b. *If No:* Does any actor in any other story remind you of somebody you know? Yes.....No.....
If Yes to 4b, get details.
5. If there was a change in your favorite program, which of the following would you mind less:

If the story remained the same but the actors changed.....

If the story changed but the actors remained.....

Why?
6. How do you think your favorite story is going to continue? (In the next week? Later on?)
7. What product do they advertise?.....
Do you use it? Not at all.....; Use since started listening.....; Used before already.....
 - a. Do you use the products of other stories you listen to?.....
All.....; Some.....; None.....

B. ANY SERIAL PROGRAM

8. In this or any other program, was there ever a situation where you would have acted differently from how it happened in the story? Yes.....No..... Explain.
9. Can you mention a story or episode which meant a great deal to you in indicating what to do in a particular situation or how to get along with people? Yes.....No.....Details.
10. Did you ever come across a problem or a situation in any of the stories which had occurred to somebody you know, or to yourself? Yes.....No.....Details.
11. Do you remember ever having gotten quite excited about a story? Yes.....No.....*If Yes: When, and which story?*

IV. GENERAL APPRAISAL

1. As a rule, which of the following is more true: The various stories are quite similar.....; rather different from each other.....
Explain:
2. Which of the following is true, as a rule: The people in the various stories have about the same amount of troubles as you have.....; more troubles.....; less troubles..... Explain:
3. How do you like the episodes to end: Happily.....; sad.....; mixed..... Explain:

4. What do you prefer: Stories with problems similar to your own ; stories with problems quite different from your own.....? Explain:
5. Is there any particular problem you would want to have treated in a story? Which?
6. Do you have any definite opinion about how many months or years a serial story should last?
7. Would you like a new station to bring out one complete half-hour story every day? Yes.....No.....Explain:
8. Do you talk about the stories with your friends.....; your husband.....; your children.....; nobody.....?

V. DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENT

Address..... Age..... Education.....
 Single..... Married..... If married: Number and age range of children.....
 Occupation: (Own or husband's if she is a housewife)
 Phone: Yes.....No..... Car: Yes.....No..... Description of type of place she lives in.....
 Last book read..... When finished.....
 Magazines read.....
 Does she read serial stories there? Yes.....No.....
 Newspapers read fairly regularly.....

 Attends meetings of any clubs or organizations.....

 Do friends visit her: During the day: A great deal..... Sometimes..... Rarely.....
 Evenings: A great deal..... Sometimes..... Rarely.....
 Any hobbies or special interests?.....

 What radio programs liked best?.....

 Three movies liked very well.....

 What are the three things she would be most interested to have.....

 If not working now: Ever worked before? Yes..... No..... If Yes: Would she like to return to it? Why?.....

 Additional data: